



# TOWER HAMLETS FEDERATION NEWS

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An organisation run by and for residents of Council or social housing properties in Tower Hamlets.

Newsletter of Tower Hamlets Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs)

## Private rents go through the roof

Kangaroo markets properties for private rent, as well as advertising flatshares and rooms for rent. They have been monitoring rents over the last year and report that private rents are up 6.65% overall in London. The average London room rental price in 2014 is now £609, compared to last year's price of £571.

Tower Hamlets features in second place in their list of most popular boroughs – after Camden and followed by Newham, Westminster and Ealing.

Fortunately we are not in the list of the most expensive boroughs, which is: Westminster, Camden, Kensington & Chelsea, the City of London and Islington.

Nor are we in the list of boroughs with the highest increases in private rents. They are: Bromley, Barking & Dagenham, Greenwich, Bexley and Camden.

It's not much, but that may well be a little tiny bit of good news!

Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) help residents with individual and collective problems on their estate. The Federation brings TRAs in the borough together, both to represent residents boroughwide, but also to share good practice between ourselves.

Everyone's welcome: whether you are a TRA Committee member or resident who wants to get involved.

Look out for our AGM on Monday, 29th September.

## Next Meeting: Mon 21st July

The Federation's July meeting will be at 7-9pm on a Monday at the end of July.

We would normally meet on 28th July (the fourth Monday) but as this is highly likely to be Eid we are bringing the meeting forward to 21st July (which will also be before the holiday season gets underway). The meeting will be held at the East London Tabernacle, Burdett Road, E3. Because of the change of date, we cannot use our usual room. We shall be meeting, for this month only, in a room which is up a flight of stairs and there is no lift.

There will be someone on the door until 7.30pm. If you arrive later, please ring the bell and wait for our creaky-kneed doorkeeper to make it downstairs.

## Contact the Fed

admin@th-federation.org.uk tel. 079 03 06 03 03  
www.th-federation.org.uk

The Federation office is in the Unite Community Centre,  
The Basement, St George's Town Hall,  
236 Cable Street, London E1 0BL  
Drop in sessions are temporarily suspended.  
Please telephone for an appointment

## HARCA sells property in return for cash to build

In our last newsletter we quoted from a local newspaper report indicating that Poplar Harca had taken money from the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) to build 287 properties - but it had agreed to sell 24 properties in return. Harca said "the properties we're selling are mainly bedsits or one beds, none are family units. The sales cross-subsidise the new build."

However, Harca had been found putting a two bedroomed flat in Langdon House up for auction. Two bedrooms? Isn't that a "family unit"?

Harca has now clarified its earlier comments with the following statement.

"The AHP definition of a 'family unit' is three bed plus. We have primarily targeted 1-bed and bedsit homes for sale, where the cost of bringing them up to our lettable standard was greater than the average.

"The particular property in question needed a significant amount invested to bring it up to that lettable standard and so we took the decision to dispose of it in a newly refurbished block so we could maximise the income from it – all to be invested in building new homes.

"We have now sold all 24 of the homes to meet our obligations to the Homes & Communities Agency under the 2011-15 Affordable Homes programme. Of the new properties built, 112 of them are 3 bed plus. They are a mixture of shared ownership, social rent and affordable rent."



## Picture Quiz

Tenants are always pleased when landlords do their best to provide an adequate allocation of disabled parking places. It's even better when the landlord marks them up clearly and enforces the space, making sure that only cars which qualify get to park in the disabled spaces.

The landlord of the above estate has done all those things. Unfortunately, they have parked their own vehicle in the disabled space! We've obscured the landlord's name on the van: can you guess which Tower Hamlets landlord hasn't told its staff not to park in disabled bays?

Answer next week.